England. — Churches, &c. 2

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MINUTES

— Baptists — New Connexion

OF AN

ASSOCIATION

OF

GENERAL BAPTISTS

HELD IN

CHURCH-LANE, WHITE CHAPEL,

LONDON,

The 11th and 12th Days of April,

M.DCC.LXXXVII.

Juſt Publiſhed,

A CHARGE and SERMON, together with a CONFESSION of FAITH, delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. GEORGE BIRLEY, on Wedneſday, October 18, 1786, at St. Ives, Huntingdonſhire. The Charge, by D. TAYLOR, of London; the Sermon, by R. ROBINSON, of Cambridge. Price 1s.

ALSO,

A CHARGE and SERMON, delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. JOHN DEACON, on Wedneſday, April 26, 1786, at Leiceſter; together with the INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE, the QUESTIONS propoſed to the CHURCH and the MINISTER, the ANSWERS returned, and Mr. DEACON's PROFESSION of FAITH. The Introductory Diſcourſe, and Charge, by D. TAYLOR, of London; the Sermon, by W. THOMPSON, of Boſton. Price 1s. 6d.

AND

A SECOND DISSERTATION on SINGING in the WORSHIP of GOD; introduced with TWO LETTERS to the Rev. Mr. BOYCE, in Defence of a former Diſſertation on that Subject. By D. TAYLOR. Price 6d.

All ſold by J. BUCKLAND, Pater-noſter Row; and B. ASH, No. 15, Little Tower-ſtreet.

LETTER

TO THE

CHURCHES.

BELOVED BRETHREN,

WITH pleaſure we embrace another opportunity of reminding you of your high and holy calling, and of the obligations which lie upon you to *walk worthy* of it. Since our laſt annual meeting, many of thoſe who have been our companions in the *kingdom and patience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, have left this ſtate of darkneſs, ſin, and ſorrow; and are, we truſt, numbered among the bleſſed in the regions of everlaſting light, holineſs, and joy. How many of us, who ſurvive them, may be called hence before another year is paſt, is known to him alone, who is the diſpoſer of all events; "in whoſe hand our lives are, and "whoſe are all our ways." Let us hear the divine admonition, "Be ye alſo ready." "Whatſoever thy hand finds "to do," whatever thy Maker requires, and thy department in life demands, "do it with thy might." There is no time for trifling. We are living for eternity; vaſt awful eternity! A moment now loſt, is loſt for ever! Every moment now improved for God, will, through the blood of his dear Son, be rewarded in glory. "Gird up "therefore, brethren, the loins of your mind; be ſober, and "hope to the end, for the grace which is to be brought to "you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt." "Be diligent, "that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot and "blameleſs."

Keep near to God in the exerciſe of faith, meditation, watchfulneſs, and prayer. Your ſpiritual enemies are nu-

merous, artful, and powerful. Your weakneſs is great, and you want much wiſdom and ſpiritual ſtrength. But, be not diſcouraged. "Your heavenly Father is ever ready "to give his Holy Spirit to them that aſk him." By his power you ſhall be enabled to *do worthily*. "They that "wait on the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength;" and being daily ſtrengthened from above, you ſhall overcome all your adverſaries, die triumphant, and ſit down with your glorified Redeemer on his throne, as he overcame and is ſet down with his Father on his throne.

Your diſtreſſes may be heavy and frequent, from within and from without. "In patience poſſeſs your ſouls." Your heavenly Father overſees and controuls the univerſe; and "all things work together for good to them that love "him." You will certainly find the benefit of them in this world or the next, or in both worlds. Soon your difficulties and labours will be at an end; and chearing to think of! they will be at an end for ever. When you have endured a little more "heavineſs through manifold "trials, if need be—you ſhall "receive the end of your "faith, even the *complete* ſalvation of your ſouls." O that bleſſed day! That never-fading inheritance! An inheritance with God! An inheritance, to the poſſeſſion of which, poor ſinners are advanced, through the blood of the Lamb! Keep this inheritance, this high prize in view, brethren; and "ſo run that you may obtain.

Finally, "ſeeing ye have purified your ſouls in obeying "the truth, through the ſpirit, unto unfeigned love of the "brethren, take care that ye love one another with pure "hearts fervently." Let your love to each other be tender, cordial, and operative. "Love as brethren." Conſider your relation to each other, and act a conſiſtent part. Remember him who gave himſelf for you, even when you were enemies againſt him; and "let the love of Chriſt con-"ſtrain you" to love one another. Be careful not to offend each other by tempers, words, or actions, which indicate the want of *brotherly kindneſs* and affection. Overlook each other's weakneſſes. Remember you are all imperfect; and have many defects, of which, perhaps, none of you are ſufficiently apprehenſive. Let this teach you to "forbear one another, and forgive one another, as Chriſt "forgives you" all. "Bear one another's burthens." "Weep with thoſe that weep." One great end which is anſwered by Chriſtian ſociety, is intimacy with each other's trials,

trials, ſympathy connected with that intimacy; and Chriſtian activity in each other's behalf, produced by that ſympathy. Pray earneſtly one for another, and endeavour to "provoke one another to love and good works." In one word, dear brethren, "Be perfect, be of good comfort, be "of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and "peace will be with you."

In behalf of the Aſſociation.

D. TAYLOR.

MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY morning met for public worſhip, at at half paſt ten o'clock.—Brother J. Taylor preached from 1 Joh. v. 10.—dined, and aſſembled for buſineſs at half paſt two.——Brother D. Taylor, chairman; brethren Thompſon and J. Taylor, moderators.—Propoſed, by deſire, "Whether members of our churches who are neither "officers, nor choſen as repreſentatives, may be admitted "as hearers in our aſſociations?" which privilege has been denied, for ſpecial reaſons, for ſome years paſt.—For their admiſſion, 23.—Againſt it, 1.—The reſt neuter.

LIST of the CHURCHES.	Number of Members.	Increaſe by Baptiſm.	Remove.	Reſtoration.	Decr Remove.
Aſhford, Derbyſhire	15	3			
Aſlocton, Nottinghamſhire					
Barton, Leiceſterſhire	148	8	2		1
Birmingham	58	8			7
Boſton, Lincolnſhire	80		2	1	
Burnley, Lancaſhire	30	1			
Caldwell, Derbyſhire	44	2			
Caſtle Donnington, Derbyſhire	83	6	1		
Church Lane, Whitechapel, London	206	21	10		
Goſberton, Lincolnſhire	14	1			
Halifax, Yorkſhire	50		1	1	8
Harbury, Warwickſhire					
Hinkley, Leiceſterſhire	119	23	1		
Ilkiſton, Derbyſhire	61	9	4		
Kegworth, Leiceſterſhire	121	13		1	
Killingholm, Lincolnſhire	40	9			
Kirkby-Woodhouſe, Nottinghamſhire	17				
Kirton, Lincolnſhire	40	6			
Leak, Nottinghamſhire	164	6			5
Leiceſter	85	10	5		
Longford, Warwickſhire	130	4	1		4
Long Sutton, Lincolnſhire	32	2			
Loughborough	260	10	2	1	6
Maltby, Lincolnſhire	65	2			
Melbourn, Derbyſhire	220				4
Nottingham	132	41	1	1	
Queenſhead, Yorkſhire	58	8			1
Retford and Gamſton, Nottinghamſhire	61	7			1
Wadſworth, Yorkſhire	100	7			1
Wiſbeach, Cambridgeſhire	30	2			
Yarmouth, Norfolk					
	2463	209	30	5	38

Increaſe by Baptiſm	209
Remove	30
Reſtoration	5
Total Increaſe	244
Total Decreaſe	128
Clear Increaſe	116

Decreaſe by Remove.	Decreaſe by Expulſion.	Decreaſe by Death.	REPRESENTATIVES of the ſeveral CHURCHES.	Paſtors.	Unordained Preachers.
—	—	—	Benjamin Birley. — —	—	1
1	1	3	William Holmes, Deacon. —	2	—
7	—	2	A Letter — —	—	3
—	3	2	William Thompſon, Paſtor. —	1	—
—	2	1	Richard Foulds, Paſtor. —	1	1
—	—	—	Joſeph and Charles Norton. —	—	1
—	2	—	N. T. and W. Pickering, J. Baker.	1	1
—	5	6	J. Brittain, D. Taylor, Paſtors; B. Lewis, C. Williams, W. Shenſtone, Deacons; J. Mackintoſh, &c.	2	2
—	—	2	A Letter. — —	—	1
1	8	—	A Letter. — —	—	1
—	—	—	A Letter. — —	—	1
—	—	5	A Letter. — —	1	3
—	—	2	John Goddard. — —	—	1
1	—	4	John Tarratt, Paſtor. — —	1	1
—	—	—	A Letter. — —	1	1
—	—	—	A Letter. — —	—	—
—	3	1	A Letter. — —	—	2
5	2	2	A Letter. — —	1	—
—	6	2	John Deacon, Paſtor. — —	1	—
4	1	2	W. Denton, J. Magſon, W. Jackſon, and J. Payne. — —	—	—
—	—	—	A Letter. — —	1	—
1	6	2	7 Benjamin Pollard, W. Pegg. —	1	1
—	—	—	A Letter. — —	1	—
4	5	5	John Smedley. — —	1	1
1	—	3	1 Robert and James Smith. —	—	1
—	1	—	1 John Taylor, Paſtor. — —	1	1
—	1	—	1 Jonathan Scott, Joſeph Doſſey. —	2	—
—	1	—	— A Letter. — —	1	1
—	—	5	— Joſeph Freeſtone, G. Yorke. —	—	1
—	—	—	— —	—	1
—	—	—	—	—	—
5	38	44	46	20	27

Decreaſe by Remove —	38		
Expulſion —	44		
Death —	46	—	128
Total Number of Preachers	47		
Total Number laſt Year —	38		
Increaſe of Preachers —	9		

STATES OF THE CHURCHES.

ASHFORD. Pretty well attended with hearers on the monthly day, when the preachers come; have been eſpecially animated under the miniſtry of brother J. Taylor, who has lately been with us ſome weeks. At Wardlow our number of hearers is conſiderable.—Have not been ſo unanimous and happy for ſome weeks paſt, by far, as we were before.——It appears, that if we had a ſuitable miniſter ſettled with us, we ſhould be more happy ourſelves, and many others would ſoon join us.

BARTON. The ſtate of religion in our own ſouls, and in the ſouls of others much lower than we could wiſh.—This is a day of ſmall things.—We bleſs God that he does not deſpiſe it.

BIRMINGHAM. Vital religion, we fear, at a low ebb—we earneſtly requeſt an intereſt in the prayers of the brethren.

BOSTON. We are ſorry to obſerve ſome of our members unſettled by ſome vain jangling profeſſors.—Converſion-work apparently at a ſtand, by diſputes and contending parties—and enquirers ſubverted and turned aſide from the moſt important concerns, to mere ſpeculations, and controverted points of doctrine.

BURNLEY. Have had ſome trying circumſtances lately, which have too much divided our hearts from God, and one another—but now pretty unanimous.—On the whole, we think religion is reviving—well attended with hearers; but much reaſon to complain that too little regard is paid to the word of God; yet we truſt that ſome are concerned about their ſouls.——One young preacher, who is pretty well approved.

CALDWELL. Preaching twice every Lord's day—a prayer meeting in the week-day—tolerably unanimous.

CASTLE-DONNINGTON. Well attended with hearers at Donnington—not ſo well at other places—yet good reaſon to believe that our labours are in ſome meaſure uſeful here, eſpecially at one, where two perſons have profeſſed converſion.—Tolerably harmonious; yet want more vital religion, and a better conduct in ſome; though others are more excellent.—Have the happineſs to conduct buſineſs in a peaceable manner in our church meetings.

GOSBERTON. Religion very low, and likely to decline, unleſs we can more frequently obtain aſſiſtance from other churches.

churches.—We think brother Thompſon might ſometimes viſit us on the Lord's day, and adminiſter the Lord's ſupper to us, and ſome others might ſupply for him at thoſe times.—Think this would be of ſingular ſervice to us, if it could be obtained.—Should be very happy in being viſited from miniſters of other places more frequently—tolerably united in affection, and earneſtly pray for the cauſe of Chriſt to advance.

HALIFAX. Our ſituation lamentably low;—the congregation ſo decreaſed, that only ſeven or eight perſons take ſeats—and we fear the cauſe will ſink yet lower, unleſs an able miniſter can be obtained. Town large and populous—other denominations have able miniſters, and their cauſes ſeem to flouriſh.—None flouriſhed more than our own, during the ſhort time that we had the like advantages.

HINKLEY. Peaceable at preſent; but exerciſed with ſome outward difficulties;—a heavy debt which we are endeavouring to remove; on which account, œconomy forbids our ſending a repreſentative to the aſſociation this year. The fund for the widows of miniſters we wiſh to aſſiſt in ſupporting; but diſapprove the plan of conſolidation.—Brother J. Shipman now labours under a very peculiar affliction, which has deprived us of his uſefulneſs.—We earneſtly deſire the prayers of the brethren in his behalf.

ILKISTON. Miniſters and officers nearly as laſt year—united and happy in general; pretty well attended with hearers;—but lament the low degree of zeal in ſome members.

KEGWORTH. United and peaceable, though ſome are defective in love and zeal;—but others more lively, active, and zealous.—Religion, we hope, advancing; pretty well attended with hearers, and a few candidates for fellowſhip.

KIRTON. We think ourſelves happy in having the advantage of brother Scott's labours once a fortnight, who frequently adminiſters to us the Lord's ſupper.—We hope religion is rather on the advance, and that we are generally lively and ſteady in purſuing the good old way.

KIRKBY-WOODHOUSE. We lament that the goſpel has had ſo little ſucceſs in this place for ſo many years paſt; but hope it is on the advance in ſome reſpects, as ſeveral young people ſeem to embrace the goſpel. Our meetings are better attended than they have been for ſome time paſt. We acknowledge, with gratitude, brethren, your care over us, in viſiting and preaching to us; and beg you will continue your aſſiſtance;—that the Lord may ſucceed your

labours

labours here, and in every other place, where you are employed, is our earneſt deſire, and moſt fervent prayer.

KILLINGHOLM. Preaching every Lord's day at Killingholm, and once a fortnight at Ulceby.—Two freſh places opened for preaching, viz. Halton and Imingham; where we are pretty well attended.—Prayer meetings at Ulceby and Imingham. Pretty unanimous.—There ſeems an open door, but we have ſome enemies.

LEICESTER. Several troubles have ariſen, which have produced ſome unhappy conſequences; but hope they are nearly at an end. The cauſe of religion ſeems to advance, —number of hearers very conſiderable, and ſtill encreaſing; though often very defective in attending on the Lord's day morning; and too late at other opportunities.

LEAK. One paſtor, one ruling elder, three deacons.—Pretty well attended with hearers at Leak, Widmorpool, and Broughton, but not ſo at Wimeſwold. In general peaceable; but love and zeal wanting in many.—Brethren pray for us.

LONGFORD. Under many diſadvantages for want of a ſettled miniſter.—Many, we fear, low and indifferent about the cauſe of Chriſt, and their own ſouls; yet a few deſire to ſee religion flouriſh, and make the things of God their chief ſtudy.

LONG SUTTON. We are happy to ſay that unanimity dwells among us; we hope true religion is making gradual advances.—Officers and meetings as in former years.

LONDON. (Whitechapel). Two paſtors, ſix deacons; two of theſe are called out to preach occaſionally. Preaching three times on a Lord's day in Whitechapel. A week-day lecture at our own meeting, and one at Poplar, about four miles diſtant. A private meeting, weekly, for communicating experiences, and exerciſing the gifts of young men. Church meetings once a month, and extra church meetings occaſionally; at which we have a diſcourſe delivered once a quarter, on the advantages and duties of church members.—Happy and unanimous; truſt the work of the Lord proſpers among us.—Some active for God and his intereſt; though too many otherwiſe.—Beg an intereſt in your prayers.

LOUGHBOROUGH. One paſtor, one young preacher.—Deacons and meetings nearly as laſt year.—Tolerably well attended with hearers; in general harmonious.

MALTBY. Religion low; members decreaſe in number.

ber.—Preaching at Maltby and Alford every Lord's day. Many hearers at Maltby.

MELBOURN. Officers and meetings nearly as laſt year, except that we have another deacon in the room of our beloved brother, Francis Mee, deceaſed.—We have had ſeveral diſagreeable circumſtances, which have occaſioned much trouble, weakened our love, and greatly hindered our proſperity. Yet we hope to gain ſome experience thereby, which may do us good; and we ſincerely pray that love to God and the brethren may yet abound.

NOTTINGHAM. We truſt that, on the whole, we are tolerably united,—well attended with hearers.—We have a young man, who has occaſionally ſpoken in public.—Two perſons are nominated for ruling elders, and two for deacons. We hope religion is conſiderably on the advance.

QUEENSHEAD. Since laſt year, ſome diviſions and perplexing circumſtances have ariſen; but in general, we are now unanimous.—Well attended with hearers in agreeable weather; many in great afflictions at preſent, by fevers, and other diſorders, which rage in our neighbourhood.

RETFORD AND GAMSTON. Stated preaching at both theſe places every Lord's day;—preaching, or experience meetings at each place in the week-day. Brother Scott preaches frequently at Kirton, Miſterton, and Wellow. Religion ſeems to advance at all theſe places—in general unanimous and lively.

WADSWORTH. Not very well attended with hearers at preſent; but expect a revival when the ſummer approaches.—Have reaſon to complain of too much lukewarmneſs; yet, on the whole, religion ſeems to advance.

C A S E S.

CASE I. Whether members of our churches, who are neither officers, nor choſen as repreſentatives, may, on their requeſt, be admitted as hearers in our aſſociations?

Ayes, 23. No, 1. Several neuters. Propoſed to be re-conſidered next aſſociation.

CASE II. The church at Aſhford requeſt aſſiſtance in procuring a ſtated miniſter; and wiſh to propoſe it to the conſideration of this aſſociation, whether it may not be more advantageous to the intereſt of religion on the whole, if brother J. Taylor were removed to Aſhford?

Anſw. After carefully reading and maturely conſidering the

the reſpective ſtatements of Aſhford and Queenſhead on this caſe, and the arguments from our brethren at Wadſworth and Halifax, againſt the remove, it was the unanimous and decided opinion of the aſſociation that ſuch a remove would at preſent be improper.

Case III. Complaint being made from ſeveral churches, reſpecting the conduct of ſome young perſons in fellowſhip, who have unadviſedly allowed themſelves to keep company with each other, when marriage was neceſſarily at a great diſtance, which has been the cauſe of great trouble and diſorder; the opinion and advice of this aſſociation is requeſted, whether ſomething cannot be done to prevent ſuch evils in future?

Anſw. It is the opinion of this aſſociation that the conduct here complained of, indicates an undue thoughtfulneſs for the morrow; is inconſiſtent with the great Chriſtian rule, "Do all to the glory of God," as well as with our daily petition, "Lead us not into temptation,"—and cannot be vindicated from the charge "of living after the "fleſh."

We apprehend that ſuch conduct naturally tends to entangle the mind; to carnalize the heart; to impoveriſh the ſoul; to ſpiritual idolatry, by loving the creature more than the Creator; to unfit the mind for religious exerciſes, and every part of the worſhip of God; and if perſiſted in, to deſtroy the very eſſence of real religion.

Such conduct, if known, expoſes thoſe who are guilty of it to the cenſure of the world; of their brethren; of their own conſcience, if duly awakened, and rightly informed.—It is likely to bring others into difficulties and troubles; to be a church grievance, if not a public ſcandal.—It often happens, that ſuch perſons are diſappointed in their moſt ſanguine hopes, and wounded in the moſt tender part.

We therefore earneſtly adviſe all our young friends to give up themſelves, body, ſoul, and ſubſtance to the bleſſed God; to remember they are not their own, but are bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and are therefore under every obligation to cleave to the Lord with full purpoſe of heart.—Let each ſex, when ſpeedy marriage is not deſigned, keep at a becoming diſtance from the other, with reſpect to the intimacy ſuppoſed in this caſe, leſt they entangle themſelves before they are aware; and pierce themſelves and others with many ſorrows.

N. B.

N. B. Brother D. Taylor is desired to prepare a circular letter on this subject against the next association.

Case IV. Is it right for church-members to attend at other places of worship, unnecessarily, at the time when that church to which they belong, meet together? If not, what is the best method to prevent such misconduct?

Answ. We judge this conduct is very disorderly; and advise that such persons be freely admonished respecting the impropriety of it. If they be not reformed by instruction and admonition, but alledge, as an excuse, their dissatisfaction with the ministry under which they are placed; we apprehend, they ought to certify this to the church to which they belong, and peaceably withdraw from it. If they refuse to do this, when advised to it, and yet continue their disorderly conduct, we think the church ought to withdraw from them.

Case V. The church at Burnley in Lancashire, having at former associations made application for advice and assistance, in the building of a meeting-house, to which they have been encouraged; have bought a piece of ground for the purpose, and wish to know when they may wait on the churches for their contributions.

Answ. The case of Burnley is agreed to be admitted the first after the consolidation collection is completed. But as this cannot conveniently be till next year, we advise them till that time, to have a monthly collection among themselves.

Case VI. The advice of the association is requested with respect to the observation of what is called Christmas-day.

Answ. It cannot be necessary that this day should be observed universally; because we have no command in scripture for it. It cannot be wrong to perform, or attend public worship on that day, suppose there be opportunity, and reasons which appear sufficient to warrant it. So far we are unanimous. In general we think every church ought to consult circumstances, and act accordingly. But four or five oppose any attention to worship on that day more than others, for any reason whatever.

Case VII. The church at Gosberton desire the advice of the association with regard to the methods which they ought to take with the people at Spalding, who have hitherto been a part of the same church; but have lately encouraged a person to preach among them, who left the church very abruptly about six years ago. He now professes to be sensible of the impropriety of his past conduct; but is forward

ward to preach, and does preach, without the conſent of the church. The brethren at Goſberton judge this very diſorderly, and have remonſtrated againſt it; but in vain. They wiſh to be inſtructed what to do in the affair.

Anſw. It is the opinion of the aſſociation, that the church at Goſberton ought to call the people at Spalding to account for their conduct, and to endeavour to bring them to repentance: And if they obſtinately perſiſt, to exclude them; and if they have not given up the meeting-houſe to them, to ſhut them out of it; and that brother Thompſon, and ſome other miniſter, or miniſters, meet with them to aſſiſt them in this buſineſs.

Case VIII. The church at Halifax propoſed to the conſideration of the aſſociation their low ſituation for want of a miniſter, and wiſhed it to be conſidered, whether it would not be a proper ſtep to romove brother J. Taylor from Queenſhead to them, urging the largeneſs of the town, his ability to ſuit them, &c. The church at Queenſhead alſo urged their reaſons againſt it. After a very cloſe and impartial examination of the arguments on both ſides, the queſtion was put, "Ought brother J. Taylor to remove to Halifax?

Anſw. 27 Noes. 9 Neuters.

But we advertiſe our Halifax brethren, that there are two perſons called out by the church in Church Lane, White Chapel, London, and two others at Nottingham and Burnley; concerning whom we adviſe them to enquire; and we wiſh to aſſiſt them in procuring a miniſter, as much as we are able. In the mean time, we recommend it to them, to apply to the churches at Queenſhead and Wadſworth, to give them all the aſſiſtance they conveniently can, till a miniſter ſuitable to their circumſtances can be procured.

Case IX. The church of Ilkiſton ſolicits the advice of the aſſociation relative to their building a meeting-houſe at Smalley; alledging, that their preſent conveniency is only a dwelling-houſe; there ſeems to be a prevailing deſire of hearing in the neighbourhood; and generally, even in winter, many are obliged to ſtand without, or return home. The people are generally poor; ſo that the aſſiſtance of the churches is greatly wanted, and earneſtly requeſted.

Anſw. We adviſe our Ilkiſton brethren not to build this ſummer, as ſome other caſes muſt be attended to before theirs.

theirs. But if they wiſh to attempt it at a future time, we recommend it to them to enter into a ſubſcription among themſelves, to raiſe a little by periodical contributions; and it is probable that at the next aſſociation, encouragement will be given them in proportion to their own exertions.

Case X. The church at Longford, having been long deſtitute of a miniſter, and failed in their attempts to obtain one, deſire the advice of the aſſociation with reſpect to the propriety of inviting brother T. Pickering from Caſtle Donnington.

Anſw. The caſe was attended to ſeriouſly, and the evidence on both ſides conſidered, we believe, with impartiality. After much time ſpent upon it, the queſtion was put, "Does it appear that the intereſt of religion will be "advantaged, by the ſettlement of brother T. Pickering "at Longford?" Ayes, 21. Noes, 3. Neuters, 14.

We adviſe our Longford brethren to take ſuch ſteps for the ſettlement of brother T. Pickering among them, as they apprehend to be conſiſtent with prudence and brotherly love.

According to advice given them laſt year, the church at Retford and Gamſton, have ſent an account of their religious principles to the ſeveral churches. Theſe are approved; and that church is now fully united in this connection.

Several churches have ſent in their expreſs approbation of the charity, vulgarly called the Widows' Fund; and declare their readineſs to contribute to the ſupport and advancement of that inſtitution. But as ſome do not ſeem to underſtand what is required, we think it proper to inform them, that the fund is not ſupported by annual collections in different congregations. But if any church ſhall collect and contribute five guineas or more at one time, they may make a donation of that ſum to any one perſon whom they ſhall think proper; who, by making a donation of the ſaid ſum to the charity above-mentioned, is, in conſequence of that donation, conſidered a ſubſcriber; and, as ſuch, has power to give his vote, if preſent, on all occaſions. Any church, or individual, may repeat ſuch donation, or the donation of any larger ſum, as generoſity, or other circumſtances may direct.

The propoſition reſpecting the conſolidation plan, recommended in the minutes of laſt year, was re-conſidered, and the plan generally approved; though a few objected againſt it. As, therefore, ſeveral caſes were preſented, which could not otherwiſe be ſo advantageouſly attended to, nor taken

up

up in any reaſonable time; nor the way ſo well opened for the ſucceſs of caſes which may be preſented in future, it was generally thought very neceſſary to be adopted.

The churches which deſire a ſhare in the conſolidation, and appear to ſtand in real need, are thoſe of

Shore, indebted	L. 60	Halifax, indebted	L. 30
Harbury, —	50	Birmingham, —	150
Long Sutton —	70	Ilkiſton, —	45
Queenſhead —	50		

Brother J. Deacon is deſired to draw up and print a letter, briefly ſtating the ſeveral caſes of theſe different churches, and to circulate the ſame among the churches, to open a way for making collections. That the deſign may be accompliſhed with expedition and œconomy, it was thought proper to divide the work among ſeveral hands in the manner following:

D. Taylor, and A. Auſtin, to viſit the churches in London, Kent, Suſſex, Hants, Wilts, &c.

J. Deacon to viſit the churches in Leiceſterſhire, Derbyſhire, Warwickſhire, Nottinghamſhire.

G. Birley, and J. Freeſtone, to viſit thoſe of Hertfordſhire, Buckinghamſhire, Bedfordſhire, and Huntingdonſhire.

W. Thompſon, and J. Ingham, to viſit thoſe of Eaſt Lincolnſhire, and the Iſle of Ely.

J. Scott, to viſit thoſe of Weſt Lincolnſhire, the North of Nottinghamſhire, and Hull.

J. Taylor, and J. Sutcliffe, to viſit thoſe of Yorkſhire and Lancaſhire.

It is particularly deſired that the whole may be finiſhed before the next Aſſociation.

Agreed, that a friendly letter, with a copy of theſe minutes, be preſented to the General Aſſembly, meeting in Worſhip-ſtreet, in Whitſun-week.

The next Aſſociation to be held at Birmingham on Wedneſday and Thurſday in Eaſter-week.

The perſons appointed to preach next year, are

D. TAYLOR.
W. THOMPSON.
B. POLLARD.
} In caſe of failure, {
F. SMITH.
J. DEACON.
R. SMITH.

N. B. The repreſentatives are deſired to put up at the George Inn, Digbeth.

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